



ig update

in said he would argue in opposition. "They hit us so we're ing to hit back" is the attitude."

Meaning that Commissioner Roy Gore had stated in an rlier meeting with the com-ssioners that if Rico was asking for more money, the county ould start charging the Town Rico for the use of the City aintenance Shop, located in st Rico.

Board member Judy Schaefer ked Bankston, "Is this per-ived as an attack? Because we t wanted to ask the question. u can always say no."

Bankston said it was defi-

nately perceived as an attack.

It was previously agreed upon by the Commissioners and the Town of Rico that Rico would pay \$1 per year for the use of the structure.

Town Attorney Eric Heil told the board members that the land and the structure were given to the County by the mining company years ago, and for them to turn around and charge Rico for the use of it doesn't really seem fair.

Mayor Tom Clark said "We're not trying to make major infrastructure plans with the extra money (from the Road & Bridge fund), but we could use it for the street fund, mag chlo-ride applications, etc."

Heil addressed Bankston's earlier comment about county and city issues being different, saying that, "I think we have a lot of county issues, and in fact, we're over our heads with county issues."

Harrison thanked residents Jerry Akey, Katherine Allen, and Deana Ireland for doing some cleaning in Town Hall a couple of weeks ago.

Harrison reported that the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) will conducting a training workshop to the Planning Commission on January 14.

The Town will be moving forward with the alluvium project, said Harrison, to obtain approval from the Division of Water Resources and CWCB.

Under Old Business:

The 2nd reading of Ordinance No. 2003-8 adopting the 2004 budget was approved with a couple of changes and one amendment; allocating money to the park fund for the acquisition of land by town park; changing some numbers to reflect the Town's increase in total evaluation, but also to show that assessed valuation has de-

creased.

The 2nd reading of Ordinance No. 2003-7 authorizing the purchase of lot 4-14, block 27 (land by town park) was approved.

Also approved was the consideration of Resolution No. 2003-6 to establish the Rico Detachment Study Committee and appoint committee members. To date, five residents have turned their letters of interest in to the Town Manager; Joe Croke, Eric Heil, Keith Lindauer, Nicole Pieterse, and Erin Sweet. The Detachment Committee will be comprised of 7-11 residents of diverse education and background. The meetings will be open to the public and held at Town Hall. The first meeting is scheduled for sometime in January. Date and time TBD.

The officers are in place for the Rico Center for Community Development Committee. Katherine Allen, Donovan, Spitzman, and Barbara Turrin.

They will have their first meeting sometime in January and are hoping to recruit more board members. Date and time TBD.

Under New Business:

A discussion of EPA and environmental issues ensued.

"It sounded fluffy at the meeting, but it's really a huge undertaking," was Heil's response to the EPA meeting that was held Friday, Dec.5th.

"I think there're bigger issues going on that doesn't have Rico's interest at heart," he added.

Heil went on to say, "Atlantic Richfield Co. (ARCO) has done a lot of work, they've had public meetings, a community presentation, sent out newsletters, had a community BBQ--- EPA hasn't given anyone anything.

"ARCO wants to come back to Rico and do more extensive

sampling for themselves."

The EPA has known there were lead issues here since 1995, according to Heil.

Heil has been working long and hard on the EPA issue and was getting attorney fees from Town Hall for a short time, but then that well ran dry. He then declared that he would be working pro bono on the project, which he did for several weeks. Subsequently, after all the articles about Rico and the EPA were published in newspapers across the four corners Heil said he's been getting 5-6 phone calls per day requesting him to research this and look up that. With so Many other issues and projects on his plate, Heil said he could no longer work for free.

Town board members were in agreement. Harrison recommended to the Town Board, and they were in agreement, that money be pulled from the general fund to pay Heil for his work. Heil declined from taking back pay, but said that from that night forward he needed to get paid for his work.

Board members met in executive session and agreed upon a sum to give to Heil.

In the meantime, resident Keith Lindauer suggested to County Commissioner Bankston that the county may be able to help with legal fees since the Town of Rico is exhausting their funds for this project.

The St. Louis tunnel, one of the major sites that will be remediated by the EPA, is within the County limits, not Town limits, was the board's argument.

Bankston said, "I'm not ready to give you an answer tonight, and I don't know what the County's role will be as it plays out, but I will look into it."

The meeting was adjourned.

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